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A Partner in Conservation*

NEWS RELEASE

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USDA ANNOUNCES 2005 CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM CONTRACTS FOR MINNESOTA

SAINT PAUL, MN –JULY 28, 2005 – Regional Assistant Chief, Merlin Bartz today announced that the USDA will offer 590 Conservation Security Program (CSP) contracts across the state of Minnesota. These 2005 contracts being offered translate into more than \$4,227,650 long-term commitment to conservation over the next ten years.

“CSP participants are conservation innovators. What they do today will lead to additional environmental benefits for the nation as they share their knowledge of conservation with others,” said Bartz at a CSP event in Stearns County, Minnesota. “The program is offered nationally on working lands rewarding the nation’s leading conservationists and providing incentives for them and others to do more.”

USDA expects to fully invest the \$202 million provided by Congress for this fiscal year. Environmental enhancement activities offered by applicants include improving soil quality, water quality, wildlife habitat management, nutrient and pest management, air quality management and on-farm energy management..

Following the process outlined in the CSP sign-up notice published in the Federal Register on March 25, 2005, applications will be offered according to the published enrollment categories, in order, until the funding is exhausted. USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will offer contracts to applications in enrollment categories A and B and subcategory C-1.

NRCS also extended the comment period on the interim final rule for CSP to Sept. 9, 2005. This extension will give the public additional time to comment on key issues regarding implementation of the program. The extension notice was published in the Federal Register on July 20, 2005. Comments can be made via the Federal Register at the Regulations website farbillrules@wec.usda.gov.

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